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TAGS: [IZ](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PINS](#)

SUBJECT: WHAT BAGHDAD'S GOVERNOR THINKS OF RECONCILIATION

Classified By: Classified by PRT Team Leader Joseph Gregoire for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (U) This is a Baghdad PRT Reporting Cable.

¶2. (C) Summary: Governor of Baghdad Province Hussein al-Tahan told PRTOff that he does not think any kind of outreach to Sunni political parties is worthwhile. Although he said he has met many of Baghdad's various political leaders, he scoffs at the idea that negotiations at his level with insurgents or their sympathizers will result in any meaningful compromises that could reduce the level of sectarian strife in Baghdad. Despite his rhetoric, al-Tahan has issued directives to change the Sunni/Shia make-up of several police stations - an act that could ostensibly bring better sectarian balance to Baghdad's security forces. End summary.

¶3. (C) Governor Hussein al-Tahan (Badr) again criticized the Baghdad Security Plan (BSP) during a PRTOff visit to his office on March 20. He reiterated his usual mantra that he has been sidelined by the security officials responsible for BSP, and that he is never informed of ongoing operations. When asked whether his representative at the Baghdad Operations Command (BOC) is receiving information, al-Tahan replied there is little cooperation between the BOC and his office and offered few ideas how it might be improved.

¶4. (C) Governor al-Tahan was critical of the current BSP operations, which he suggested focus solely on the Shia areas of Baghdad; in particular, Sadr City. He said there is a widespread opinion among the Shia that their neighborhoods are being targeted, while other, and to their minds, more dangerous (i.e., Sunni) areas are being neglected. Al-Tahan said this will 'awaken' the forces like Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM) after their recent interlude of 'sleep'.

¶5. (C) Asked about current reconciliation efforts, al-Tahan seemed bemused that someone in his position and with his authority might reach out to rival political organizations in an effort to dampen sectarian strife. He laughed about members of the Council of Representatives making such efforts and asserted that most of the leaders of the Sunni parties are 'two-faced.' What they say in front of a TV camera is entirely different, he suggested, than what they intend to do.

¶6. (C) Later in the conversation, al-Tahan spoke about the placement of police stations in various parts of Baghdad. He disclosed that he had directed Iraqi Police stations in Husseiniya, a largely Shia section, and in Rashidiya, a Sunni enclave, to swap chiefs and to balance the Sunni/Shia mix of officers between the two stations.

¶7. (C) Comment: Governor al-Tahan remains volatile, capricious, and unrepentant about his pro-Shia agenda.

Occasionally, he surprises us with seemingly constructive moves that just might bring stability to Baghdad and succor to its inhabitants. End comment.

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